# Multimodal Literacy in Teaching Foreign Languages: The Example of Power Point Presentations

Joanna Hardukiewicz

DOI: 10.18355/XL.2024.17.04.15

**Abstract**
Multimodality is a very popular issue that is discussed with reference to various disciplines. The ability to interpret and create multimodal texts is a necessary skill in the contemporary world, where texts in which verbal language is accompanied by images and other modes of expression that convey relevant information dominate. Therefore, it is necessary to equip learners of foreign languages to effectively interact with multimodal texts. The purpose of the paper is to investigate the level of multimodal literacy among L2 users in the academic setting, using the example of PowerPoint presentations, and to point out the advantages of involving multimodality in teaching foreign languages, especially in teaching writing. The results of the study show that the potential of multimodality is often overlooked by teachers and students, who tend to treat visual elements mostly as decoration instead of using them as tools for enhancing successful communication. The investigation may be useful for foreign language teachers, who should focus more on teaching multimodal literacy in their writing courses to prepare students for functioning in the contemporary world. It is also a first step in developing a new methodology for teaching L2 writing.
**Key words:** multimodality; multimodal literacy; multimodal texts in teaching writing

## Introduction

Most dictionaries define literacy as "the ability to read and write" (e.g., Oxford Learner's Dictionary or Cambridge English Dictionary), which relates this concept to verbal language only. The UNESCO Institute for Statistics provides a broader definition: "Literacy is the ability to identify, understand, interpret, create, communicate and compute, using printed and written materials associated with varying contexts (…)".The definition provided above does not restrict literacy to verbal language, although it still suggests the written character of the input with which the literate person interacts. On the other hand, Peterson from the National Council of Teachers of English states that "literacy is the way that we interact with the world around us, how we shape it and are shaped by it. It is how we communicate with others via reading and writing, but also by speaking, listening, and creating". By using the word "creating", this definition moves literacy closer to the concept discussed in the present article, namely multimodal literacy, insofar as multimodal messages involve not only verbal language but also other signs, including visuals. Therefore, apart from literacy focusing on verbal language, another type needs to be discussed, namely visual literacy.

International Visual Literacy Association provides two definitions, one of which states that visual literacy is "the group of visual competencies a human being can develop by seeing and at the same time having and integrating other sensory experiences" (Debes, Fransecky,1969). The second, more contemporary definition found on the website of the aforementioned Association defines visual literacy as "a set of abilities that enables an individual to effectively find, interpret, evaluate, use, and create images and visual media. Visual literacy skills equip a learner to understand and analyze the contextual, cultural, ethical, aesthetic, intellectual, and technical components involved in producing and using visual materials. A visually literate individual is both a critical consumer of visual media and a competent

contributor to a body of shared knowledge and culture" (Visual Literacy Standards Task Force, ACRL, 2011). This definition highlights the complexity of visual literacy as a phenomenon enabling a successful interaction with the world in which messages with verbal language accompanied by images prevail.

As van Leeuven observes, monomodality was, for a long time, highly valued in Western societies, and academics tended to investigate modes of expression from the monomodal perspective[1]. The first instances of multimodal research appeared in the 1930s and 1940s, when linguistic research of the Prague School devoted their attention to theatre, contributing to the development of the social semiotic theory of multimodality. This approach was later applied in various fields, including discourse analysis, whose main foundation is Halliday's social semiotic communication theory. According to this perspective, texts are "meaning-making events whose functions are defined by their use in particular social contexts" (Halliday, 1989). Furthermore, a text is no longer perceived as a unit combining words. However, it is said to consist of other modes of expression as well (Baldry, Thibault 2010: 4). These modalities interact in a text in order to convey a given message, and as Saraceni observes, the interaction occurs both on an inter-semiotic level, between various modes, and on an intra-semiotic level, i.e. within each mode involved in a text (2001: 433). Therefore, the proper analysis of such texts should embrace all the applied types of signs insofar as "examining one semiotic resource in isolation (…) results in an impoverished view of how that resource is organized for meaning" (Lim Fei 2004: 229). In the context of teaching, this approach is particularly useful even when discussing phenomena that were traditionally associated with a single mode, like reading, insofar as Mills and Unsworth observe, e.g., reading practice in the 21stcentury involves "the integrative construction of meaning from print and images" and is no longer a linear but rather parallel processing (2017: 19).

Van Leeuwen (2017: 4) observes that multimodal literacy is a complex concept thatthat embraces aspects such as textual and contextual knowledge and aesthetic and critical dimensions. The author points out that while interacting with multimodal texts, it is necessary to pay attention to aspects that were traditionally not associated with verbal communication, such as "the aesthetic uses of layout, color and typography" (2017: 4). The interpretation and proper use of multimodal modes of expression are the skills that are crucial in the contemporary world and as such should be taught at schools. Vaish and Towndrow observe that the increased interaction with "computer-mediated communication" has highly influenced "the literacy practices of school-going children" (2010: 317), and the appearance of new media created new needs connected with literacy that modern education should acknowledge (2010: 321). Also, Van Leeuven emphasizes that the common access to modern technologies "such as Word and PowerPoint have made multimodal text design accessible to all" (2017: 4). Whereas printed texts in the past were also accompanied by other means of expression, like for example drawings, it is due to digital technology that that in modern communication meaning is derived not only from words but also from elements of a text. Therefore, literacy should go beyond "logocentrism or an overemphasis on the printed word" (Lemke 1998: 284 in Vaish, Towndrow, 2010: 321).

Goldstein (2016) observes that in teaching foreign languages, teachers mostly focus on the verbal aspect and treat visuals as a decorative element. However, nowadays, influenced by the changing nature of our environment, teachers are starting to appreciate the visuals and evaluate teaching materials with respect to their visual aspect. This shift of attention took place because the classroom environment adapted to the changes occurring in the contemporary world, and in modern days, students can use various tools that enable them to involve images in their assignments. Learners have applications and tools to create "presentations, comics, sketches, mind-maps, word clouds, or short videos" (Goldstein, 2016). Additionally, due to the recent

pandemic, the application of online tools in education became crucial, making the interaction with multimodal texts in teaching and learning even more popular. Apart from traditional assignments, students could create, for example, blogs, which allow them to improve their reading and writing skills, display creativity, and practice skills connected with interacting with multimodal stimuli (Hardukiewicz, 2021). The potential of multimodality in teaching is undeniable. Apart from simply increasing the attractiveness of lessons, it also contributes to developing numerous skills that could not be improved with monomodal teaching materials. With respect to visual literacy only, researchers enumerate a number of abilities that may be useful also outside the school environment, such as critical viewing, visual reasoning, visual association, or constructing meaning (Avgerinou, Pettersson, 2011). The Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) stated that even though students encounter images in every stage of their education, the ability to understand, use, and create visuals is often taken for granted, and students are rarely taught these competencies. Therefore, ACRL introduced a set of seven standards for visual literacy competence for higher education, including, for example, using images and visual media effectively, which allows students to achieve such objectives as successfully integrating images in their academic work".

Whereas multimodal literacy is relevant in many aspects of foreign language teaching, including listening, reading, and writing, the attention in the present paper will be paid to writing, insofar as on the example of the conducted analysis of PowerPoint Presentations, it seems that many students, first of all, cannot create effective multimodal texts. This may result from the fact that most coursebooks devoted to teaching writing in the academic context ignore the potential of visuals. One of the most popular coursebooks of academic writing provides the visual illustration of some popular types of texts that L2 students need to be able to create at the very end of the book with only a short note that "the above format is only one possibility and it is worth looking at other CVs to compare layouts" (Bailey, 2006: 190). The visual aspect of CVs, as well as of other types of texts discussed in the coursebook, is not devoted to attention, even though it is highly important and influences the reception of such texts. A similar situation takes place in the book *How to Teach Writing* by Harmer (2004), where, e.g., while discussing cohesion and coherence of texts that are multimodal in nature (such as newspaper advertisements), the author does not mention the relation between images and verbal texts at all, which suggests that visuals are not a significant component of such texts.

On the other hand, Ann Raimes, in her book entitled *Techniques in Teaching Writing* (1983), devotes a whole chapter to "techniques in using pictures" (27). However, she does not mention the possibility of including pictures in the texts created by students. On the contrary, she observes that "writing teachers can find a valuable resource in pictures," which can be used as stimuli for learners to create texts such as, e.g., description, sentence combining, paragraph completion, or controlled composition (27-32).

Harmer (2004) points out that paying attention to genres and their characteristic features in teaching writing is useful. He provides examples of genres, ranging from advertisements to postcards and sonnets, emphasizing the fact that the writer needs to be aware of both the function of such texts and their structure in order to be able to effectively create texts for different purposes (16). Similarly, due to his or her knowledge of genres, the reader can recognize texts and ascribe them to various categories, which facilitates communication (17). This approach is compliant with Bakhtin's definition of a genre, according to which every genre consists of style, themes, and composition, and all these components should be investigated when a given genre is discussed (1986). Harmer (2004), in his instructions for writing, focuses on construction constraints within the verbal part of texts. While discussing

cohesion and coherence, he describes lexis and grammar, pointing at various elements which contribute to the linguistic unity of a text, such as "repetition of words," "lexical set 'chains'," or "pronoun and possessive reference" (25-29). Even though the author in the same chapter provides examples of texts in which pictures significantly contribute to genre recognition, he does not pay attention to the fact that the visual elements should also follow the rules of cohesion and coherence, and the awareness of this fact could assist writers while creating their texts. This fact seems particularly relevant in the case of PowerPoint Presentations, whose structure is inevitably linked to visual elements.

It is common knowledge nowadays that people remember information better when it is absorbed through more than one sense. For example, Cipolla states that when we only hear things, we remember around 10 percent of new information; when we only see things, we remember approximately 20 percent, but when we both see and hear the new data, we retain around 50 percent. Therefore, the use of PowerPoint presentations, whose popularity started in the late 1990s, has become a common practice in presenting various types of information in different fields, including marketing, education, and business. Presentations of this type can be considered a multimodal genre insofar as they combine verbal language with visual and sometimes auditory elements. Stoner observes that whereas the use of presentations is very beneficial because, for example, it can draw and retain the audience's attention, it can also bring negative effects when a presentation is not accurately prepared. D'Angelo (2018), following many contemporary researchers, enumerates several disadvantages of using ready-made templates of presentations provided by Microsoft, such as decreasing personal connections between the speaker and the audience or disturbing the flow of information. Therefore, preparing a presentation that reinforces the message rather than blurs it is essential for representatives of various fields, including education. Myers (2000 in Swales 2004: 7) discusses the negative impact of including PowerPoint presentations in education from a lecturer's perspective. He observes that the use of presentations changes the position of a lecturer from a "star" of the speech into "an unseen voiceover" of the lecture. For Myers, this is particularly undesirable in an academic environment, where the speaker should be perceived as the reliable source of knowledge using a presentation to support him and not as the narrator of a presentation only. On the other hand, what some lecturers may perceive as a disadvantage is often a temptation for students, who can hide behind presentations.

Furthermore, in an extensive study of how a Mexican postgraduate student used various visuals in his academic activities, Camps (2004: 14) observes that the student used images in his assignments mainly because they could help him avoid making mistakes in written English by replacing the number of words he needed to use with images. Additionally, students have various learning styles, which influence their preferences concerning the use of either verbal or visual means of expression when presenting their assignments and learning from external sources. All these observations may lead us to the conclusion that applying presentations in an academic environment may be very beneficial only when the presentations are accurately prepared. The drawbacks of presentations mentioned by Myers can be avoided when the presentation is not too entertaining. Hence, moderation in using modes other than words in academic settings is essential. A similar point should be made when students' presentations are discussed. Hence, the excessive application of visuals may deprive their work of scientific value and, instead of helping clearly express ideas, may distract the other students' attention.

Considering all the aforementioned observations, we may conclude that involving multimodal tools in teaching and learning is crucial in the contemporary world in which monomodal is hardly ever observed. Although many researchers acknowledge this, teaching students and lecturers the skills needed to create effective multimodal materials is still not very common. This prevents both learners and teachers from

using the whole potential of multimodality. Lotherington and Jenson observe that "appropriate teacher education, assessment practices, the pedagogical space to experiment with multimodality (…) are critical directions for creating the conditions for successful multimodal L2 teaching" (2011: 241). Lim and Tan-Chia notice that "in light of the digital age and the changing profile of learners, it is timely to reflect on the pedagogical shifts needed in the classroom" (2023: preface). A similar observation is made by Papageorgiou and Lameras, who state that "this transitional shift from print-based education to multimodal education indicates the need to rethink how teaching and learning is conceived, approached and practiced" (2017: 133). Therefore, the present article argues that language learners should be taught foreign languages by applying multimodal tools. They should not only be the receivers of such texts, but their assignments should also involve the creation of multimodal texts insofar as they allow students to use language in the context prevailing in the modern world. Therefore, teaching multimodal literacy should be a component of courses devoted to teaching productive and receptive skills, which will be further discussed in the example of teaching writing. Furthermore, based on the conducted study, the paper will try to evaluate the level of multimodal literacy represented by university students using the example of presentations they prepared as their final assignment.

**Methodology**

The study aimed to examine the level of multimodal literacy among university students. The research was based on analyzing 50 PowerPoint Presentations: 34 prepared by MA students as their final assignment during the first semester of the 1st year at the Faculty of English (part-time studies) and 16 presentations prepared by MA students as their final assignment during the first semester of the 1st year at the Faculty of English (full-time studies). The students were native Polish speakers, whose English language proficiency level can be generally defined as B2 or C1 according to the CEFR scale. The first group of students involved mostly adults who, in most cases, both work and study, and the second group involved teenagers. In the first group, the purpose of preparing the presentation was to demonstrate the students' ideas for writing their MA thesis, and the lecturer specified the presentation's content. According to the guidelines that students received, the presentation should include:

- a description of the problem and presentation of provisional but valid research questions,
- a presentation of the sources from which the data will be collected and the method of collecting the data,
- a presentation of the method(s) selected for analysing the data,
- A short list of selected literature will be included in the bibliography.

In the second group, students were asked to prepare a presentation explaining and illustrating a selected phenomenon in cognitive semantics. However, in this group, the teacher's instructions concerning the presentation content were not as precise as in the former case.

The presentations were submitted to the Moodle platform and later delivered by students during the lessons.

The present study is both qualitative and quantitative and was guided by the following research questions:

1. *What visual elements do students use in their L2 presentations, and what functions do these elements play in creating the multimodal message?*
2. *Are students aware of the potential of visual elements in L2 multimodal communication, or do they treat visuals as a decorative element only?*
3. *How can the use of visual elements assist students of L2 in presenting the required content?*

The analysis focused on examining the presentations concerning their multimodal character. The researcher first counted the number of slides in each presentation and checked how many students used some multimodal elements. Then, the visual elements were classified into three main categories: colors, font, and other visuals, including pictures. Finally, the researcher paid attention to the interaction of these visual elements with the verbal part of the presentation and discussed the purposefulness of using the visuals from the perspective of a user of L2.

**Findings**

The analysis embraced 50 PowerPoint presentations. In 48 presentations, the students used visual elements extensively in all slides. In 2 presentations, the visuals were limited to the varying font size.

**Colors**

Kress and van Leeuwen observe that colors are a semiotic resource with the potential to carry meaning both when attached to other elements, like verbal language, and on their own (2002: 346). Saraceni (2001: 440) points out that "the semantic value of any written language" may be increased by visual elements, and colors can be one of them. This can be achieved, for example, by increasing the importance of a certain part of a text by applying a distinctive color, like red. Furthermore, colors can have meaning on their own, for example, due to some cultural connotations that they carry. Kress and van Leeuwen (347-350) relate colors to Halliday's metafunctional theory of language, and they observe that all three functions, namely ideational, interpersonal, and textual, may also be discussed with reference to colors. The ideational function of denoting certain ideas may be fulfilled by colors used, for example, on flags that relate colors to nations; the interpersonal function is manifested when colors influence other people's behavior, for example, by warning them or drawing their attention by applying specific colors. Textual function is related to creating, for example, the textual coherence achieved by using the same colors, e.g., in headings.

Consideringering all the aforementioned observat colors can be very significant when they are used tations in a purposeful manner. Apart from being a decorative element, they can influence people's opinion on both the presentation and the presenter; they may help emphasize relevant information and contribute to the understanding of the delivered message by maintaining the coherence of the presentation. Colors may also help the presenter by highlighting the relevant information, which may be especially useful from the perspective of L2 learner, who can use his or her presentation as a support in delivering a presentation in L2.

While analyzing colors applied in the students' presentation, I observed that the choice of colors seems to be rather random, rarely guided by any practical function. Concerning the background colors, five presentations were white, and 45 used all possible colors. There were 21 presentations in which students used colors that made the slides look professional. These include white, which, according to www.color-meanings.com/, is associated with clarity and creates the effect of simplicity and balance; black, associated with formality and authority and symbolizing elegance; and dark blue, connected with reliability. However, ten presentations used colors that seem to be highly inappropriate for presentation, such as pink, which is related to emotions, romance, and love rather than to formal context, and pastel colors, which deprive the presentation of a serious look and too flashy colors, which may distract the audience and cause that the verbal content of the presentation becomes overlooked. Fourteen presentations used both professionally-looking colors and inappropriate colors. In most of the presentations, the use of colors was consistent in all slides. However, there were nine presentations in which, on some slides, different

colors were applied. Such a design caused the presentations to seem to be incoherent, especially since any practical reason did not guide the choice of distinct colors.
What seems particularly interesting is that students rarely used colors to emphasize the relevant information in the verbal text of the presentation. Text in the presentations was either white, black, or blue, depending on the color of the background, and the only parts that were distinguished by the use of other colors were the title and headings of the particular slides, which happened in only four presentations. In only two presentations, other relevant information in the content of slides was emphasized by the use of distinctive colors. These were some important terms that may be new to the listeners, and they were distinguished from the rest of the text by their application of blue or red. As has already been mentioned, using different colors could help L2 users deliver their presentation properly and assist the listeners by drawing their attention to some important facts; therefore, ignoring this potential of colors is a thing that students should avoid.

**Font**

Saraceni points out that "writing is ultimately a graphic representation of verbal language," and various elements can attach additional meaning to a written, verbal message. Among these elements, one can find colors discussed above, as well as size, italics, bold letters, and typeface. All these elements are widely used in all types of media to convey the importance of the particular elements of a verbal message (2001: 439-440). Van Leeuwen (2006 in Nørgaard 2009: 145) describes characteristic features of a typeface, namely weight (bold or regular), expansion (narrow or wide), slope (sloping or upright), curvature (angular or rounded), connectivity (connected or disconnected), orientation (horizontal or vertical) and regularity (regular or irregular). These features carry the meaning-making potential and may be used to ascribe additional meaning to written verbal language.
While analyzing the features of typefaces used by students in their presentations, it has been observed that the most frequent features used by students to distinguish some elements of the verbal text are bold letters and size. In all 50 presentations, the title of the whole presentation and the headings in particular slides are bigger than the rest of the text, which is motivated by the desire to emphasize the introduction of the discussed issue. Apart from enhancing the listeners' understanding of the conveyed message, the distinction of titles and headlines is also a good method of guiding the presenter throughout his or her speech. This may be particularly useful from the perspective of an L2 learner who does not have to devote so much attention to the order of the presented facts because the slides naturally guide them through the text. In only two presentations, italics were used for the title slide. In 1 of them, italics were applied to distinguish the name of the novel discussed in the presentation. However, this may be motivated by the convention rather than by some practical purpose. The same method of distinguishing the titles, namely italics, was used in all presentations in which the titles of some works were mentioned. Apart from the three features discussed above, i.e., bold letters, italics, and size, as well as color described in the previous section, no other visual elements were added to the font. The students used mostly Times New Roman, Calibri, and Arial, with only one presentation using Edwardian Script ITC to distinguish the title of the discussed novel in the presentation's title slide. The student's font choice is rather typical for the presentations and should be easy to read; therefore, a decorative typeface would be undesirable. A simple, clear font is also a good choice for foreign language users, who should not struggle with decoding the conveyed message due to its complicated visual layer. However, the method of distinguishing important or difficult terms with the application of different features of a typeface could have been used, especially since students also did not use colors for the same purpose.

**Other visual elements**

PowerPoint presentations offer a wide range of other visual elements that can accompany a verbal text, including charts, graphs, infographics, photos, drawings, animations, etc. However, the excessive use of such elements should be avoided to make an effective presentation. As Saraceni points out, when words repeat exactly what the image shows, or vice versa, the relationship of redundancy is created. Deleting words or pictures would not alter the conveyed meaning (2001: 445). This may be useful for L2 users with lower language levels because images may help them understand difficult terms. However, when the academic context is taken into consideration, such a situation should rather be avoided because it may lead to cognitive overload, and instead of increasing the attractiveness of the presentation, it may make the presentation too difficult to comprehend. Mayer and Moreno define cognitive overload in a learning environment as a problem occurring when "the processing demands evoked by the learning task may exceed the processing capacity of the cognitive system" (2003: 45). In the context of L2 presentations, this could happen when too many visuals are attached to the verbal text, because the student focusing on the language may not be able to comprehend the visuals or the other way round, focusing on the visuals may make it impossible for the student to fully understand the verbal message. In an ideal situation, visual and verbal elements of a presentation should complement each other by providing some new information, and both elements should be used in moderation. It is a common guideline for presentations to avoid excessive words on each slide. Bartels mentions a common 7 x 7 rule, stating that we should not include more than seven lines of text and seven words per line on a slide. Another rule is that each slide should include between 6 and 40 words to avoid information overload. A similar rule of moderation applies to images and other visual elements. Tobin (2020) states that visual elements in a presentation should be to "help make sense of the content," only images that are relevant to the content should be used, while decorations should be limited or even avoided.

When students' presentations were analyzed, it was discovered that in 33 presentations, decorative elements such as pictures were used; in 9 presentations, there was too much text on some slides; only in 6 presentations were diagrams used, and in 4 presentations, charts appeared. In 18 presentations with pictures, some images were not entirely connected with the content of the slides, e.g., one title slide of a presentation about linguistics contained an image of smiling lollipops. Students sometimes used images relating to the content of the slides, for example, a picture of an office when the office language was discussed or a picture showing Japanese scenery in a presentation about cognitive metaphors in Japanese Kanji. However, in only two presentations, pictures were used to express some additional, relevant information, i.e., examples of visual metaphors. The fact that diagrams and charts were so rarely used in presentations shows that students rely mostly on verbal language while conveying their message. This statement is supported by the observation that some presentations had too many words per slide. Therefore, the students overlook the multimodal potential of presentations, who perceive the visuals as a decoration and ignore the fact that they could use images to assist themselves in conveying the message in L2.

**Conclusions and recommendations for teachers**

The present study aimed to highlight the usefulness of multimodality in the L2 context by using the example of PowerPoint presentations prepared by the students. The study investigated the level of multimodal literacy among the students and pointed out the possible advantages of applying multimodal content in L2 presentations. The study highlighted three elements students used in their presentations: color, font, and other visuals, including decorative elements, diagrams, and charts. The research revealed that the potential of the multimodal character of PowerPoint Presentations was rarely

fully used by the students, irrespective of their age and experience. Students tend to perceive visuals as an additional element accompanying the verbal message and rarely use visuals to support themselves in conveying it. All of the discussed multimodal elements could assist students in delivering their presentations in L2 and enhance the listeners' better understanding of the presentations. However, it seems that students rarely focused on the purposeful application of multimodality in presentations but relied mostly on their intuition and aesthetic aspects. These observations may suggest that teaching multimodal literacy should not be overlooked in L2. The effective application of multimodal elements in PowerPoint presentations would assist both students' receptive and productive skills and, as such, should be included by foreign language teachers in their writing courses. Integrating multimodal elements into teaching writing should also involve paying attention to visual features of various genres, as in the contemporary world, being familiar with the lexical and grammatical features is just one part of the knowledge required to create functional texts. While discussing cohesion and coherence, it is worth directing students' attention to the fact that visual elements play a significant role in effective communication in many texts, such as advertisements, newspaper articles, or PowerPoint presentations. When providing examples before students are asked to produce their texts, in a stage of teaching writing referred to by Penny Ur (2009: 11) as presentation, it is worth discussing the visual elements, which, e.g., in the case of pictures also follow the rules applying to lexical or grammatical coherence and cohesion, e.g., by repeating certain information from the text visually. In the instruction phase (Ur, 2009: 16), these terms could be replaced by multimodal coherence and cohesion, which would instruct learners, e.g., to use in their PowerPoint presentation only such visuals whose purpose is to enhance the presented verbal content. Such instructions would help to teach writing and paying attention to a natural setting, not only in the artificial context of coursebooks and classroom communication. Therefore, it seems that effective L2 writing teaching should enable learners to practice the "micro-level" of texts in the form of language structures and vocabulary, as well as the "macro level", in which the discussed "content and organization" (Ur, 2009: 162) of texts would embrace the multimodal aspects as well.

**Limitations of the study and further research**

While the present study had an introductory character, it displayed the potential of applying the multimodal context in teaching L2 writing. However, further research should be conducted, for example, investigating how students delivered their presentations. Furthermore, a more consistent methodology should be developed to describe the respective multimodal elements of presentations. BA students should also be included in the research to see whether, e.g., the English level influences how students rely on visuals. The present article aimed to display the potential of such study in the L2 teaching methodology with particular attention paid to writing. However, this issue can be further explored with respect to other skills, such as reading and listening.

**Bibliographic references**

Aaltonen, S. (2020). Code choice and identity construction on stage. London: Routledge.

ACRL. (2011). Visual Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education. Retrieved June 12, 2024, from https://www.ala.org/acrl/standards/visualliteracy

Avgerinos, M. D., & Pettersson, R. (2011). Toward a cohesive theory of visual literacy. Journal of Visual Literacy, 30(2), 1-19. https://doi.org/10.1080/23796529.2011.11674687

Bailey, S. (2006). Academic Writing: A Handbook for International Students (2nd ed.). Routledge.
Bakhtin, M. (1986). Speech Genres and Other Late Essays. Austin: University of Texas Press.
Baldry, A., & Thibault, P. J. (2010). Multimodal transcription and text analysis: A multimedia toolkit and coursebook. London: Equinox.
Bartels, L. (2014). Too Much Text on Those Slides. Retrieved June 15, 2024, from https://www.siue.edu/sites/midweekmentor/pages/2014/slides.shtml
Camps, D. (2004). The design of visual materials for academic purposes: The case of one Mexican postgraduate student at an English-speaking university. Estudios de Lingüística Aplicada, 115.
Cipolla, R. (2012). How to prepare and deliver a presentation. Retrieved June 12, 2024, from https://mi.eng.cam.ac.uk/~cipolla/archive/Presentations/MakingPresentations.pdf
D'Angelo, L. (2018). PowerPoint presentations in the classroom: Re-evaluating the genre. Language Value, 10, Estudios de Lingüística Aplicada, 115.
Fransecky, R. B., & Debes, J. L. (1972). Visual literacy: A way to learn – A way to teach. Washington, DC: Association for Educational Communications and Technology.
Goldstein, B. (2016). Visual Literacy in English Language Teaching. Cambridge University Press. Retrieved June 10, 2024, from https://cambridge.org/betterlearning
Halliday, M. A. K., & Hasan, R. (1989). Language, Context, and Text: Aspects of Language in a Social-Semiotic Perspective (2nd ed.). Oxford University Press.
Hardukiewicz-Chojnowska, J. (2021). The application of multimodal texts in online education in the times of the COVID-19 pandemic: A linguistic analysis of blogs. In Proceedings of the 37th International Business Information Management Association (IBIMA), May 30-31, 2021, Cordoba, Spain.
Harmer, J. (2004). How to Teach Writing. Pearson Education Limited.
Hattwig, D., Burgess, J., Bussert, K., & Medaille, A. (2011). Visual Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education. Association of College & Research Libraries. Retrieved June 5, 2024, from https://www.acrl.org/ala/mgrps/divs/acrl/standards/visualliteracy.pdf
Kress, G., Leite-Garcia, R., & van Leeuwen, T. (1997). Discourse semiotics. In T. A. van Dijk (Ed.), Discourse as Structure and Process (Vol. 1). SAGE.
Kress, G., & van Leeuwen, T. (2002). Colour as a semiotic mode: Notes for a grammar of colour. Visual Communication, 1(3), 343-368.
Lemke, J. L. (1998). Metamedia literacy: Transforming meanings and media. In D. Reinking, M. C. McKenna, L. D. Labbo, & R. D. Keiffer (Eds.), Handbook of Literacy and Technology: Transformations in a Post-Typographic World, 283-301. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
Lim, F. V. (2004). Developing an integrative multisemiotic model. In K. O'Halloran (Ed.), Multimodal Discourse Analysis: Systemic Functional Perspectives, 220-246. Continuum.
Lim, F. V., & Tan-Chia, L. (2013). Designing Learning for Multimodal Literacy. Routledge.
Literacy, UNESCO Institute for Statistics. Retrieved June 5, 2024, from https://uis.unesco.org/en/glossary-term/literacy
Lotherington, H., & Jenson, J. (2011). Teaching multimodal and digital literacy in L2 settings: New literacies, new basics, new pedagogies. Annual Review of Applied Linguistics, 31, 226-246.
Mayer, R., & Moreno, R. (2003). Nine ways to reduce cognitive load in multimedia learning. Educational Psychologist, 39(1), 43-52.

Mills, K. A., & Unsworth, L. (2017). Multimodal literacy. In Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Education. Oxford University Press. https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190264093.013.232
Myers, G. (2000). PowerPoint technology, lectures, and changing genres. In A. Trosberg (Ed.), Analysing Professional Genres (pp. 177-192). John Benjamins.
Nørgaard, N. (2009). The semiotics of typography in literary texts: A multimodal approach. Orbis Litterarum, 64(2), 141-160.
Papageorgiou, V., & Lameras, P. (2017). Multimodal teaching and learning with the use of technology: Meanings, practices, and discourses.
Peterson, A. (2020). Literacy is more than just reading and writing. Retrieved June 5, 2024, from https://ncte.org/blog/2020/03/literacy-just-reading-writing/
Raimes, A. (1983). Techniques in Teaching Writing. Oxford University Press.
Saraceni, M. (2001). Seeing beyond language: When words are not alone. CAUCE, 24, 433-455.
Stoner, G. M. (2009). Effectively communicating with visual aids. Retrieved June 14, 2024, from https://mattstoner.net/presentations/effective_visuals.pdf
Swales, J. M. (2004). Research Genres: Explorations and Applications. Cambridge University Press.
Tobin, H. (2020). Design Guide for Visual Presentations. Retrieved August 10, 2024, from https://otl.du.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Design-Guide-for-Visual-Presentations-1.pdf
Ur, P. (2009). A Course in Language Teaching. Cambridge University Press.
Van Leeuwen, T. (2017). Multimodal Literacy. Retrieved June 7, 2024, from https://www.videnomlaesning.dk/media/2127/21_theo-van-leeuwen.pdf
Van Leeuwen, T. (2006). Towards a semiotics of typography. Information Design Journal & Document Design, 14(2), 139-155.
Vaish, V., & Towndrow, P. A. (2010). Multimodal literacy in language classrooms. In N. H. Hornberger & S. L. McKay (Eds.), Sociolinguistics and Language Education. Multilingual Matters.

*Words: 6224*
*Characters: 41 885 (23 standard pages)*

Assis. Prof. Joanna Hardukiewicz
WSB Merito University
ul. Fabryczna 29/31
53-609 Wrocław
Poland
joanna.hardukiewicz@wroclaw.merito.pl
ORCID 0000-0002-6325-2243